

To: Stanislaus, Mathy[Stanislaus.Mathy@epa.gov]
Cc: Woolford, James[Woolford.James@epa.gov]; Enck, Judith[Enck.Judith@epa.gov]; Plevin, Lisa[Plevin.Lisa@epa.gov]; Ana[abaptista@ironboundcc.org]
From: Debbie Mans
Sent: Tue 1/21/2014 1:00:48 AM
Subject: Passaic River Superfund Cleanup

Dear Assistant Administrator Stanislaus:

As we draw near to the release of the Proposed Plan and Focused Feasibility Study for the Passaic River Superfund site on January 30, 2014, we urge you to not allow the announcement date to slip.

It now marks the thirtieth year since the Diamond Alkali site was first declared a Superfund site. For nearly three decades the citizens of northern New Jersey have been waiting for their river to be returned to them. Only a comprehensive, bank-to-bank cleanup will accomplish this goal. It is illegal to even catch blue claw crabs from the River because they are so toxic due to the contaminated sediment. Yet, we know that people still crab and fish along the banks of the River, taking their poisonous catch home to their families.

Over the last several months the Responsible Parties (aka the Cooperating Parties Group or CPG) have been pushing their alternative remedy. This remedy involves only hot spot removal of the surface contamination. The CPG have been offering "grants" to municipalities, counties and nonprofit organizations along the lower River for out-of-water projects in conjunction with advocating for the lesser clean-up. More recently, the CPG partnered with Rutgers University to develop an aquaponics facility in a Newark church to grow farmed fish to exchange along the banks of the River for contaminated fish. In the presentation we saw, there were not even exchange sites located in Newark, the area of the highest contamination. While we agree that trying to stop families from eating contaminated fish is an important goal, it cannot replace a full clean-up of the River.

Yes, this will be a costly cleanup, but the cost of doing nothing less than a full cleanup is even higher - to public health, the environment and the economies of these river communities.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at abaptista@ironboundcc.org or debbie@nynjbaykeeper.org. We would be happy to speak to you further about this at any time. Please contact Debbie at 732-888-9870 x2 to arrange a call.

Thank you,

Ana Baptista, PhD
Ironbound Community Corporation
CAG Co-Chair

Debbie Mans
Baykeeper & Executive Director

NY/NJ Baykeeper
CAG Co-Chair

cc: James Woolford, EPA HQ, Office of Superfund
Regional Administrator Judith Enck, EPA, Region 2
Lisa Plevin, Chief of Staff, EPA, Region 2